

PUNCH

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Charivaria

"HITLER must be made to realise that the world is not his oyster," says a writer. Otherwise, as everyone knows, there'll be trouble in September.

A gossip-writer claims that, unlike most men, he always manages to get on with a crowd of women. Even at bus-stops?

A hiker was fined for climbing to the top of an advertisement hoarding on a by-pass road. No notice was taken of his plea that he was looking for some scenery.



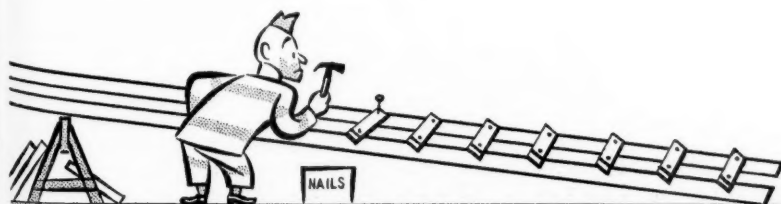
Don't Miss This.

"Two specially constructed vehicles, complete with Recruiting Officers on wheels, are now operating in various areas in England."—*Ceylon Paper*.

A new runner bean is called Rocket. Adjust pole, plant seed in ground and retire immediately.

"What to do Until the Plumber Arrives" is the title of an article in a daily paper. One might re-read *Gone With the Wind*.

"YOUR ENDS PERMANENTLY CURLED—5/-"
Hairdresser's Notice.
There's a divinity that does ours for nothing.



"The man who is constantly conjuring up fears of possible trouble to come is a fool," states a novelist. Or an insurance agent.

No More Cold Feet

"Weight is a great problem in the army, where light alloys are being used more and more in cooking utensils, hot water bottles, and so on."
Liverpool Evening Express.

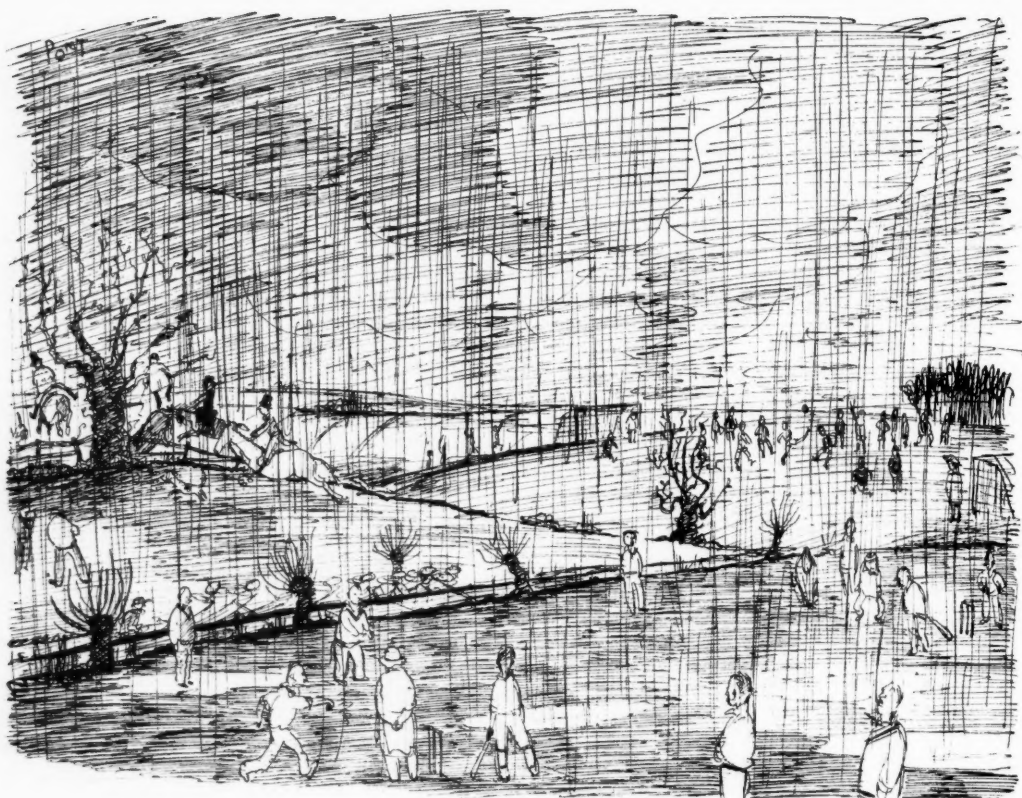
A London business-man says he now has an office-boy who has a craze for attending funerals. His suspicions were aroused by the boy's repeated requests for leave to attend cricket matches.

"WHAT TO PLANT?—ALMOST ANYTHING HARDY."

What about Laurel?

"Everything I was really interested in was forbidden," says an ex-convict in his memoirs. He found that even the windows were barred.





POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS—ENGLAND

A Gecko Axis

The Principle of "Seeing-Off"

AS we have lived together in a lonely desert station for three years Herbert and I do not attempt conversation at meals. Long ago we plumbed the depths of the opinions of each other on every conceivable topic, and so Herbert reads the money columns in back numbers of *The Times* and I study Gibbon to improve my general knowledge.

We find this the safest method, for though we work together most amicably in our task of administering the desert Bedouin, we seem to be at issue over every other point. For instance, we fell out over the question of Josephine. My heart warmed to Josephine directly I saw her, and I used to encourage her to dine with us, but Herbert resented her presence very strongly. He said she smelt and would bring fleas into the house, but, as I explained to Herbert, a man who put

highly-scented brilliantine on his hair was incapable of smelling anything correctly; and as for fleas, there were already so many in the house that the small quota Josephine might introduce would not be noticed.

THEN Butsey came to stay with us, and as Butsey is an Aberdeen terrier he had no intention of maintaining an attitude of neutrality, but took sides over every difference of opinion. In this, however, he was extremely fair, as, though he might back Herbert one day, I could count on his support the next. Over the Josephine question, however, he was definitely pro-Herbert, and saw off Josephine without the slightest hesitation on the night of his arrival. Moreover, he gave me to understand that he was disgusted to find that one of his new owners had sunk so low in the social scale as to mix

with mice. Josephine of course wasn't a common mouse. She was a jerboa—a little buff-coloured creature, all black eyes, twitching ears and tufted tail, and she was undoubtedly aristocratic, for she cocked her little fingers as she nibbled her crumbs.

Another point over which Herbert and I were at issue was the respective territorial rights of Haile Selassie, Sam Hoare and Laval, as opposed to those of Benito and Adolf. Actually the disagreement had nothing to do with either the Abyssinian or the Mediterranean questions, for these very distinguished names were borne by five geckos, those little nocturnal lizards who haunt the walls of Eastern houses.

Our first reaction to them was repulsion and horror, for with their vermilion eyes, and transparent bodies that showed their livers between their ribs, they were loathsome to look at.

It is extraordinary, however, what a warm friendly feeling mosquito-pestered men can entertain for the gecko when they see him slither rapidly down a wall and bring off four rapid "rights and lefts" at squatting mosquitoes.

SELASSIE, Hoare and Laval lived behind a framed portrait of King Fuad of Egypt on the south wall, whilst Benito and Adolf had their abiding-places on the west wall behind some very amateurish water-colours perpetrated by Herbert. There was apparently a violent tribal hatred between them, for though Selassie, Hoare and Laval were a syndicate and shared the south wall shoot in perfect amity, they loathed the sight of Benito and Adolf.

Trouble occurred always when these two, in pursuit of a mantis or large-sized *slegomyia* mosquito, strayed from their own preserve and passed the boundary of the west wall on to the south. Immediately Selassie, Hoare and Laval would charge as one man—or one lizard—from their various stations by the bracket-lamps and hit the trespasser a real rib-bender, sending him scuttling back to his own preserve.

My sympathies were with Selassie, Hoare and Laval, as they had been in residence for some considerable time before the others put in an appearance. Herbert, as might be expected, sided with Benito and Adolf, and I think he was swayed by the fact that they appreciated his water-colours. In this of course they were unique, but one must remember they saw only the backs of the pictures.

Herbert's argument was that, as Selassie and Co. had in their area two bracket electric lamps beneath which the flies assembled, it was only just that Benito and Adolf, who had no lamp, should have their aspirations for expansion recognised. They had as much right to a place in the sun, or light, as anyone, even if they had arrived late. An argument carried out on these lines has no limits, and relations were becoming strained when Butsey arrived.

Butsey is a dog of one idea. In his opinion everything except his masters and their immediate staff should be well and truly seen off the premises. The trouble was that wall lizards cannot be seen off unless a dog has sucker feet, and so every evening Butsey sat watching the geckos closely. Immediately he had grasped the international situation he joined the Selassie-Hoare-Laval axis, for undoubtedly they were endowed with the right

spirit of seeing off. If Benito or Adolf happened to pass into preserved territory undetected he called attention to the fact by barking loudly and continued his yelps until the trespassers were driven back over the frontier.

This show of partisanship did not improve relations between Herbert and myself, and the climax came when I fitted up a low book-shelf against the west wall. I did this solely to accommodate my growing pile of books, and

not, as Herbert suggests, with malice aforethought and low cunning.

The fact remains, however, that the next morning, when Herbert and I were busy bearing the "white man's burden" in the affairs of the Empire, Butsey used the book-shelf as a stepping stone to higher things. Adolf is dead, Benito has lost two-thirds of his tail, all Herbert's water-colours are smashed, and to-day I forwarded Herbert's application for a transfer to another district.

C. S. J.



Ballade of Vernal Indisposition

I LOATHE the cuckoo in his green retreat,
 I hate the larks that clutter up the sky;
 It chills my soul to hear the lambkins bleat,
 I should prefer it did the owls *not* cry;
 But all the flowers must fade and Spring must die,
 The Nymphs and Fauns must pass their tedious way;
 And May at last, thank heaven, has gone by.
 I always feel so beastly ill in May.

Fled is that health that erst I found so sweet,
 Sapped my rude vigour, and I know not why.
 Grave doctors, when they mark me in the street,
 Shake dubious heads and draw the hopeless sigh:
 "His tongue how furry! and how bleared his eye!
 His liver wilts; around his vitals play
 The streptococcus and the tsetse-fly."
 I always feel so beastly ill in May.

In every field my failure is complete:
 My foreman scowls, the cheerless sack is nigh;
 When I have turned some few laborious feet
 The Editor has sent a rude reply;
 Nay, even Chloris (of the chronic sty)
 And even Phoebe (sixty-one to-day)
 Have scorned my courtship. But what chance had I?
 I always feel so beastly ill in May.

Envoi

Prince of the Aryans, potentate most high,
 I give you thanks, whatever fools may say,
 For putting off the conflict till July.
 I always feel so beastly ill in May.

o o

It Can't Happen Here

WHAT made me think of writing about Art again—after giving you all a rest for so long—what finally distracted me from another project I had in mind (I was going to examine the problem of the tendency I have recently noticed among street-lamps to light up just as I am walking past them)—was one sentence in a brief biographical note in the catalogue of an exhibition at the Leicester Galleries. The sentence referred to Count Emanuele di Castelbarco, and it ran thus:

"After the War he opened in Milan a poetry book-shop to help artists."

Knowing nothing of the circumstances—in fact, as usual, knowing very little of any circumstances—I am ready to place this high on my list of statements that don't give you much to go on. Of course it is a simple enough statement, but I am baffled by its implications. He opened a poetry book-shop to help artists. Is that the act of a man with his finger on the pulse of the public?

It is all very well to contend that the key to the whole situation lies in the word "Milan." I dare say it does. In Milan, just after the War, maybe there was a reasonable chance of helping artists by opening a poetry book-shop: of helping them in the obvious way, I mean, by giving them cash made out of selling books of poetry. That's putting it as crudely as possible. The real method may, for all I know, have been subtler.

But I ask you to imagine how subtle it would have to be if the place were somewhere in England, and the time now.

Assuming a straightforward cash basis this proposition is absurd; the mind reels. In England, anyone starting a poetry book-shop to help artists would soon find himself getting up whist-drives and bazaars to help the poetry bookshop, and raffles to balance the loss on the bazaars. The whole thing would end with his being made bankrupt by the manufacturers who supplied the jars in which for a final desperate effort he had tried to sell his wife's home-made marmalade and pickles.

Very much the same thing would occur if he started an art shop to help poets. I don't know why he should, but we seem to be dealing with a man of eccentric and inadequately staffed enthusiasms.

Try something less direct, then. Suppose the idea of this man, whom we may as well begin to call Mr. X—suppose his idea is that when people come in to buy a book of poetry a representative selection of artists, whom he has about the place lurking in corners or concealed behind an arras or two, will leap out (in strict rotation) and try to sell a few pictures or book commissions for portraits.

I admit that the noise would bring the police in in no time and no books of poetry would ever get sold, but the main flaw in this idea is that none of the artists would do any business either. The poetry book-shop would simply get a name for being a kind of den of cut-throats in which no one with a couple of bob to spare was safe; and the man who had opened it in order to help artists would have to close it again and convert it into a pin-table saloon if he wanted to help so much as a sign-painter.

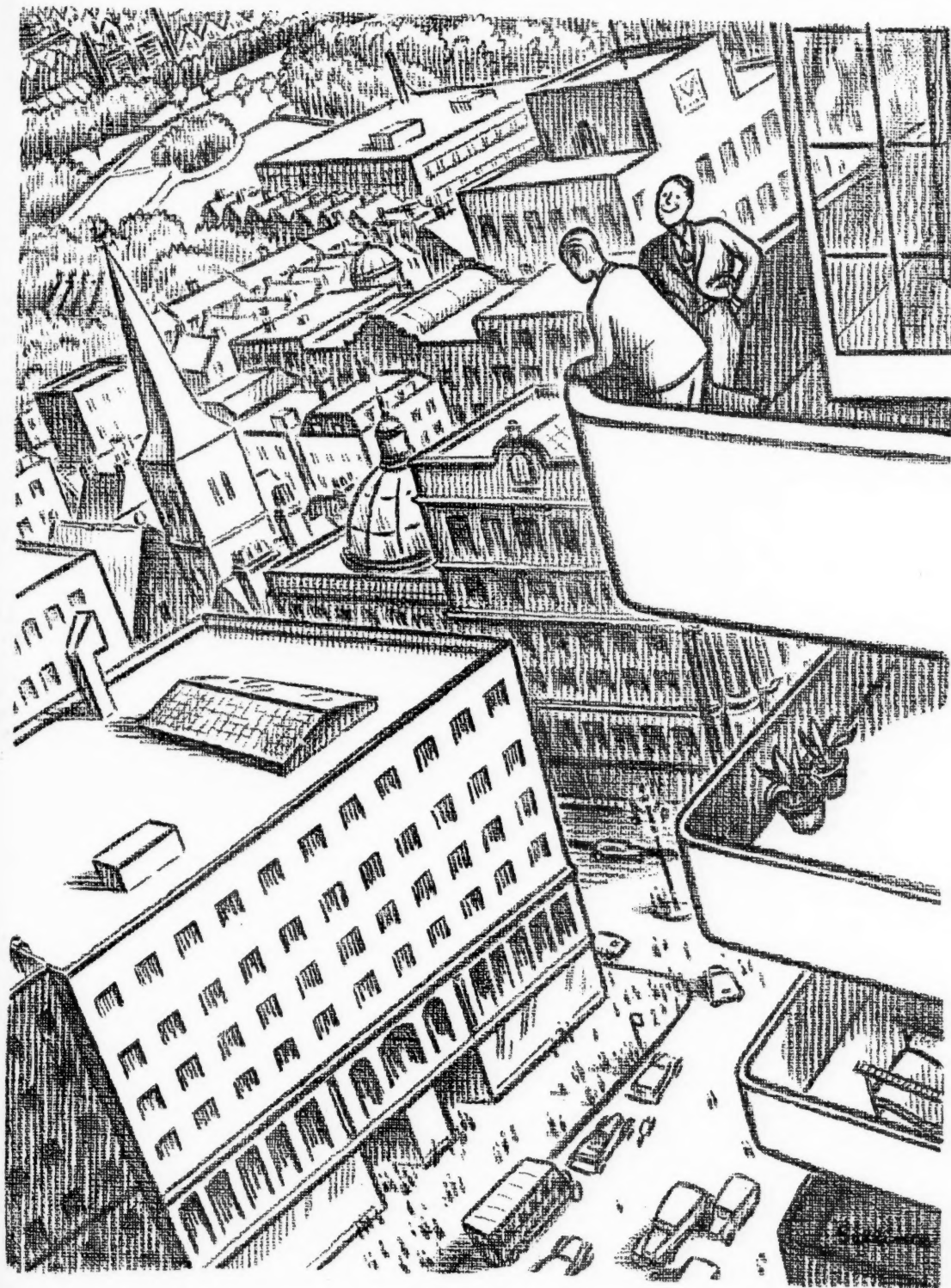
Another possibility is that the book-shop might have a lot of wall-space in which pictures, designed to attract prospective buyers when they looked up from the books, might be hung. Here again we encounter a basic misconception: the idea that a person who may have shown himself not unwilling to spend a very little money on one thing is likely to be ready to spend a good deal more on something else. Even supposing that Mr. X (who can't have very much cash left anyway, considering the thousands he keeps paying out to blackmailers) doesn't after all spend that sixpence of his on the cheapest book of verse he can find, does that mean he has enough to blue twenty guineas on an imitation Picasso he doesn't like the look of? Does it even mean he is going to part with one guinea for something that does appeal to his simple fancy, such as a print of a group of tawny Russell Flint girls, or Peter Scott ducks? Why, I doubt whether the very height of British art—a dear little baby in bed, or a dear little doggie in a basket, or a dear little pussy in a boot, or a flock of those dear old monks that have such a fine time on calendars—would wring so much as half-a-crown out of him.

For the moment this seems to exhaust my ideas about the way in which opening a poetry book-shop might be expected (erroneously) to help artists in this country. I simply cannot fathom what is in Mr. X's mind.

Of course for Milan everything would have to be modified. I can understand that it must have been to a certain extent easier, in Milan just after the War, before it had been explained to the people of Italy that mechanical warfare was more beautiful and desirable than pictures and poetry and plenty to eat. But even given those conditions the project still seems to me odd, and the abruptness with which the biographical note leaves the subject, after that one sentence, suggests to my mind that Count Emanuele di Castelbarco himself did not find it any too bright an idea.

Personally, I think of opening a sculpture-shop to help tobacconists. How does that strike you? Or don't you smoke?

R. M.



"Well—what d'you think of my little pied-à-terre?"



"Ooh, Miss, what a lot of grass to keep off!"

Malay Mysteries

THE Tuan is like one of those rare comets that hide in the corner for sixty-nine years and then shoot out and make everybody feel lit up. For a long time he remains silent in his jungle, surrounded by black magic, panthers and the most wriggly varieties of snakes. Then he seizes the inkpot and writes the sort of letter that sends your hand stealing to where a heavy revolver ought to nestle (with forty-nine others) at your belt. If one might venture to make a suggestion, however, he should write more legibly. It is frustration-making, after everybody has been thrilled to read that he has eaten some lions which disagreed with him, to have another look at the paper in a better light and find it was only limes. There was another time, when he wrote that he had had Jinns to dinner.

"Oo!" cried Ailie. "How exciting! Did they stamp on the ground and

make one-eyed black slaves jump up with soup-plates full of diamonds?"

Her mother examined the letter again. "It isn't Jinns," she said, "it's Janes. I didn't think—" and she looked rather prim.

It turned out to be only young Jones from the next plantation, wanting to know what to do with a buckshee case of champagne that a Chinese store-keeper had sent him for Christmas. The Tuan said it was a silly question.

His last letter opened with the bald but startling statement that the mice had been after his legs again.

"Be so good as to repeat that," I said.

"It's either mice or lice," said my wife, and shuddered.

"That's worse," I said. "Let me look. It isn't legs, it's pegs—no, pigs."

"Mice don't eat pigs," she said.

"Giant mice, perhaps," I said. "Or maybe it's the name of a native tribe."

"I don't believe the natives eat pigs," she said. "They're ju-ju or hoodoo or baboo, or something. Let's have another look. Oh, that's not an 'm,' that's a 't'. It's only tigers."

Only.

There was a postscript to the letter. The Tuan said briefly that he was sending some slight dross, which he hoped would be acceptable.

"Sure it isn't filthy dross?" I said.

"Positive. That's an 's'."

"Oh, well," I said. "Oriental expression and all that. I dare say that's what the Rajah of Thingummy-bob said when he showed Clive round the treasury. 'Help yourself to some slight dross, my dear Clive,' he said, indicating a shovel and a wheelbarrow."

"Oo!" said Ailie. "I wonder what it be."

"Rubies," I said. "As big as pigeons' eggs. Lapis lazuli flower-pots

with aspidistras made of chunks of emerald."

"Rubbish!" said my wife. "It isn't dross, it's dress."

"Not slight, I hope," I said—"what I mean is, none of this hula-hula business?"

"I don't believe it is slight after all," she said, wrinkling her brows. "Is there such a word as sleary?"

"It wouldn't be sleary coves," I said. "Let's see. It looks to me more like tight crows. Or tufted crows. Or crabs. Or shifty drabs."

"Don't be coarse," she said. "Now I look at it again it seems like shirty Chloe."

"Who's being coarse now?" I said. "It's more like shinty flags. Do they play shinty out there? I thought it was polo or shove-elephant."

"Oh, do stop," she said; "you are never any help. If that's the best suggestion you can make you'd better go and roll the lawn."

Then the box came—a big box, a Captain Kidd box; and all hands tumbled up, variously armed—the kitchen poker, the second-best shears,

and the only screwdriver that will drive screws. The screwdriver broke first. At least it was the handle that broke. The poker bent, the points came off the shears, and we were reduced to sending our compliments to the grocer, and would he lend us the thing he opens cases with. Yo, ho, ho! and the lid came off.

Well, I suppose they look better dead. Pa and Ma and the two nippers sat up on their hind legs, with their tails cocked up behind them and their forelegs well up in the "Arms bend" position and their mouths open, ready to bite off the legs of buccaneers, should any offer, and Ailie got behind the sofa with the screwdriver, prepared to sell her life dearly.

"Go on. Lift them out," said my wife in a wobbly voice.

"You," said I.

"I don't like," said she, and joined Ailie in the zarefa.

I up-ended the box firmly, and Pa and Ma and the two nippers came tumbling horribly out.

"I shall call them," I said, picking them up and putting them on the

mantelpiece, "Mr. and Mrs. Micawber and the twins."

"Why?" said Ailie.

"Because," I said, "they look as if they were waiting for something to turn up."

Something turned up the same day—the Vicar's wife, to ask for a subscription for the heathen. Halfway through her discourse Mr. Micawber caught her eye. He appeared to be thinking how juicy she would be. She put down her teacup, looked us over in a sternly repressive way as Stalin might look at a cell full of Trotskyists, and said good-bye in a menacing manner.

To keep off callers, put a quartet of young stuffed crocs on the mantelpiece.

W. G.

o o

Ay, Ay, Sir!

"Admiral Sir Dudley-North earlier ordered the Cruiser 'Southampton' to go ahead with searchlights sweeping both sides of the Cruiser 'Glasgow' and keep astern."

Straits Paper.



"Owing to the international situation it has been thought inadvisable to proceed with the next item, a little sketch entitled 'The Stolen Battleship.'"

Arcades Ambo

ONE of the pleasantest features of a day or two out of London is the discovery of the calm confidence in the future that exists in rural areas. I find that the country has made its mind up—I mean the real earthy country, as opposed to the City, not the Country which cuts so fine a figure in the last paragraphs of newspaper leaders. Where London says, "I'm bound to say that it does look as if there might be a short lull," the country simply says, "There won't be no war," adding as a rule that "that Hitler's seen the red light." Nor could I detect any exaggerated fear of Hitler's partner in the Axis. "Mussolini's got a cold stummick, that's about the size of it," said a man I met in a small tavern in the West Country.

Isn't that about the size of it? You might hold forth for an hour about the position of Italy and not put your finger so accurately on the spot as did that man in the tavern. He spoke with such simple conviction that denial or argument was out of the question. If he had taken the temperature of Mussolini's stomach with a thermometer he could not have been more certain. I parted from him feeling greatly cheered and shortly afterwards spoke with a hedger and ditcher, who replied to my inquiry as to what he thought of the dictators with the single word "Finished" and an expressive gesture with his bill-hook. With a Londoner, I suppose, I should instantly have joined issue, pointing out that the more difficult the position of the dictators became the greater the danger of their attempting a desperate gamble, but you can't dish out that kind of stuff to an old man with a bill-hook. He hasn't had the advantage of reading it over and over again in the papers, and he might want to know what reason you had for saying such a thing. Well, of course, history affords many

examples of autocratic rulers hurling their countries into war in a last effort to retain their supremacy, but it is surprisingly difficult, or so I have found it, to recall just those examples you want when talking to a hedger and ditcher in a country lane. The name that always springs to my mind when I am suddenly called upon to produce an instance of anything whatever from the pages of history is Caligula. This is embarrassing because I know nothing about Caligula except that he made his horse Consul, not a circumstance that one can conveniently mention to a hedger and ditcher. Of course, given time, I can recall plenty of other historical characters, Hildebrand, for instance, and Frederick Barbarossa, and Pepin the Short, but they lead nowhere. I also remember, sitting here calmly at my desk, that Darius owed his kingdom to a horse, and I could, if put to it, draw an interesting parallel between that monarch and our own Richard III, who offered to swap one for the other. There was also Alexander, who, they say, had a horse called Bucephalus, and there was the horse that Henry VIII said thingumbob was like, only that was a mare. Taking one thing with another I could probably satisfy the examiners on the subject of horses.

Still, I see that we are drifting from the main argument. One must blame Caligula for that. The point I want to make is that it's no good trying to put a countryman off with phrases unless you can back them up with something more concrete than anecdotes about famous old horses.

I found this out some months ago when I tried to convince a whiskey old chap in corduroy trousers that we should go to war if Holland were attacked and said that we always fought to keep any great Power out of the Low Countries. I said that that was why we went to war in 1914. But he had gone to war himself in 1914, and wouldn't have that, so I went a bit further back into the past. "Well, then," I said, hastily putting Caligula out of my mind, "what about all those other wars we've fought in Holland?"

"What wars?" he said.

I thought of Hildebrand and Pepin the Short and also, for some extraordinary reason, of Boniface the Eighth, whom I have not thought of at all for some seventeen years. I then made a special effort and thought of Henry of Navarre, who almost certainly had some connection with the Low Countries in the course of his interesting career; but I could not think of any way of making the connection clear to this tiresome old man. From this it was but a step to the marriage of Philip the Bold and Margaret of Flanders, an interesting event which is far too seldom recalled in this careless age. I was just thinking of Louis XVI and wondering whether he came before or after the Revolution, when the old man said, "What wars?" again and utterly destroyed my train of thought.

"What wars do you mean?" I asked.

"Wars in Holland," he said.

"Oh, yes, those," I said, and thought with extraordinary intensity of windmills and Rembrandt. Then, to my great surprise, I thought of Marlborough.

"What did he do?" asked the old man.

A great fog of ignorance about Marlborough suddenly descended upon me and blotted me out.

"I don't know," I said miserably.

"Don't you fret," he said. "There won't be no war over Holland, nor yet anywhere else neither."

I made a great effort to restore my damaged self-respect. "Talking about horses," I said. "Did you know that Caligula had a horse which he called Bucephalus?"

The old man in the corduroys, however, had moved on.

H. F. E.



"The people at Number Six have the friendliest dog I've ever met."

This Tennis Racket

NOW is the time to look for my racket
Where the late maid has been moved to
pack it—

Probably underneath the rocking-horse
And immediately over the damp-course,
And having had it uncurled
And the strings plained and purled,
And having noted that my flannels
Have acquired channels
Instead of creases,
And that my socks are in three pieces
And my shirt is much yellower
And mellowier,
And somebody has been shrimping in my shoes,
I must choose
A tie that is suitably chaste
To encompass my waist;
And then I shall be ready to disport
On the Blythe-Carringtons' court,
Which they have planned
Entirely by hand
Out of a lump
Of virgin rubbish-dump
And have marked out by eye
The previous July,
So that the lines
Look like bridle-paths through the Appenines.
They think that with the wet
The balls so soon get
Bright green
There isn't any point in beginning them clean
(Which, much more than to these,
Applies to my knees).
There isn't really much point in going at all
As it is sure to be ping-pong in the hall—
Not that I haven't known lawn tennis first
Before the cloud-burst,
When somehow I tend to get
Into an irregular set
And partnering a very young brother
Against his mother,
In an unsuitable dress
As she hadn't meant to play, and the governess,
All of whom consider scoring
Too boring.
Failing this, if they can,
They put me against the man
Who likes to win
By means of a revolting spin
And by poaching
And encroaching
On the balls I have carefully planned
At Miss Bulstrode's back-hand,
And who keeps observing—
Usually when I am serving—
That he is afraid
It is several years since he played.
More especially I dread the ones
Who, after a few buns,
Cress-sandwiches and cakes,
Eagerly await my first mistakes,
And after each cry winningly at me,
"Ah, Mr. Moody, too much tea!"
Nevertheless I imperturbably serve
My famous swerve



"I'm afraid I shall 'ave to 'ave notice of that question."

With the leg-break
Which no one can take
When it lands inside the line,
As it did twice in 1929;
And I send many unhappy returns
Into the conservatory ferns,
And some cannon-balls into the maid,
Staggering under the still lemonade.
And there is the shot where I dash in
And half-volley off my chin,
Or, keeping the game alive,
Retrieve a powerful drive
With noteworthy skill
Out of a little rill
And land it dead
On to a plantain head—
Unless my court-craft carries it beyond
Into the pond.
Then there is my smash at the net,
After which they must get
The other net out of the pig-sty,
Which is not sufficiently high
And doesn't touch
Anywhere much,
And the reason they don't normally have it is
Because of all its cavities.
More often than not
I bring off a passing shot
Which is rather good,
As it goes both off and into the wood
Where it is sought in vain
By father and the great dane—
If it can be made to quit
The court where it prefers to sit.
And
Lastly there is my back-hand,
After which someone is bound to scream,
"Ah, Mr. Moody, too much raspberries and cream!"

Bad News For Fish

I SUPPOSE there is bound to be a passing sensation the first time I slide under the Serpentine in well-cut goggles and a sharp toasting-fork.

But I defy you to read a book called *The Compleat Goggler*, put out by THE BODLEY HEAD at a cheap half-guinea, without burning to do something of the sort. It is all the fault of a Mr. GUY GILPATRIC, an American living at Antibes, who writes as vigorously as, all summer at the bottom of the Mediterranean, he fights duels with the biggest and shortest-tempered fish he can find. His equipment consists only of a pair of waterproof goggles, a spear (it has a detachable head on a short length of line), a knife and his wits. The need for the latter was brought home to him when he began by an Italian fisherman who said if he got into a bad jam with an octopus all he had to do was to go on biting it between the eyes.

The first time he went down in goggles he found himself face to face with a large fish. For quite a long time the fish stared coldly at him and Mr. GILPATRIC stared back until, the sneer on the fish's huge lips unnerving him, he uncorked what must be a massive left and socked the fish on the jaw. A moment later he was back on the surface, mourning a bleeding hand, and the fish had started for Tunis.

That taught him to take to spears, which he much prefers to the spring-guns which have been a rage on the Riviera. "In goggle-fishing," he writes, "the spear is thrust like a sword, for you cannot throw a spear much farther under water than you can throw a motor-bus on land."

Let him describe his first encounter with an octopus. "I saw a bat-like shadow moving along below me. It was dark brown and a yard across. It swam with an undulating slither close to the bottom. Occasionally a portion of it would fold together, as a butcher might fold a piece of raw liver, and then the folded part became a long tapering tentacle which licked around the rocks like a whiplash in slow action. Suddenly it folded itself into eight distinct tentacles radiating from a central tumorous lump like a derby hat, and looked up at me with a pair of protruding gold-rimmed eyes. . . . I swam down and jabbed him with the spear. . . . I missed his eyes, but got him through the bulbous palpitating body. Instantly the submarine day turned into darkest night, and I found myself being towed through a cloud of ink." After a terrific struggle he beached that octopus, the first of hundreds.

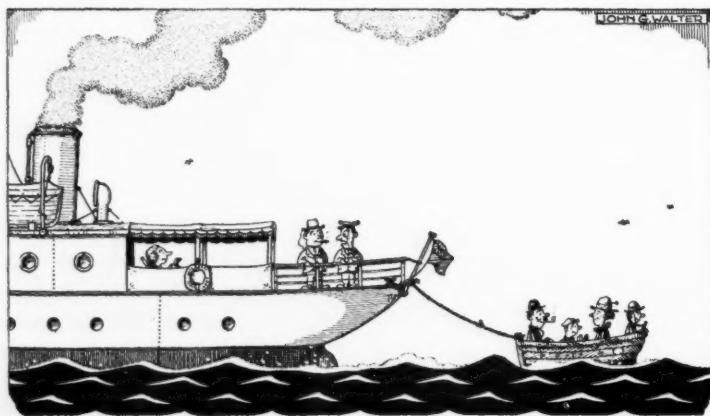
He has as keen an eye for beauty as for fish. He says the scenery down there is staggering, hills which make the Alpes Maritimes look shabby little things alternating with mysterious half-lit valleys sprouting masses of grotesque and gorgeous flowers. And there are no bill-boards urging "*joyeuses vacances en Allemagne*." Robbed of ripple and reflection the water is so clear that it seems to be not water at all, but bluish-green air through which great distances can be seen.

The fish are straight from a submarine madhouse which knows no limit of shape or colour. Mr. GILPATRIC and his little group of serious goggles

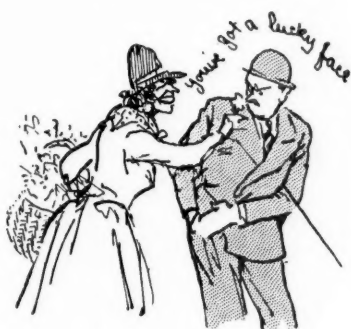
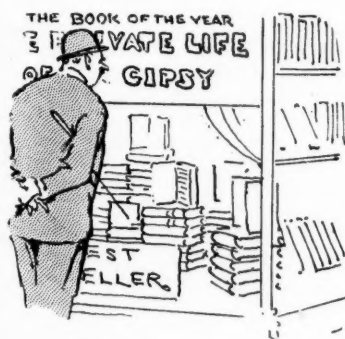
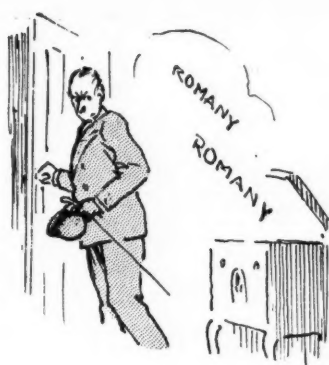
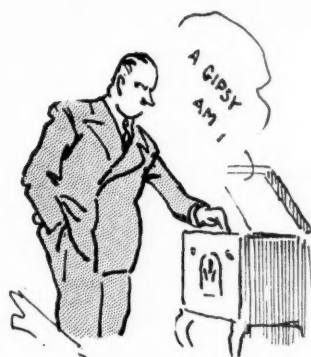
find them less wary in deep water, and so they go in from such places as the end of Cap d'Antibes, "which goes down from the surface in sheer walls like the façades of Florentine palaces." Like good dry-fly men they have given up having a stab at everything they meet, finding it more amusing to pick a big fish and stalk him, sometimes for hours. Quietness is essential, for any little sound down there is magnified by the appalling stillness, and the fish do not plug their ears as Mr. GILPATRIC does. For this reason he never dives but, having emptied his lungs, sinks feet first before turning over. He says that then the feeling of free flight among those mimsy groves has a dream-like quality which the faces of the locals do nothing to disturb.

Excellent photographs run through this extraordinary book. The best show a fight to the death between two octopi, brought up specially from the deeps by Mr. GILPATRIC. Having picked on a challenger "some three shades darker than Joe Louis . . . with the lithe grace of a tubful of tripe poured from a tenth storey window," he glided down, gave him the works and began to steer him gently towards civilisation. "It was like taking a dog for an airing in a world without lamp-posts." All was going well when suddenly the Kid turned purple with rage, and another octopus of the same size flung himself upon him. Separation was impossible, for "the Kid had tied up the big palooka with a headlock, two hammerlocks, a half-Nelson and four distinct toe holds." Somehow Mr. GILPATRIC towed them both up to the shallows, where his friends had marked out a ring.

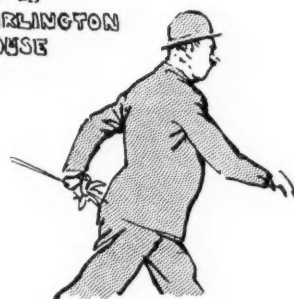
The bell went. In spite of the spear in his back the Kid took the initiative right away. "He just simply swarmed over that big bum. He squeezed him, he bit him, he shot ink into his eyes; he picked up pebbles in his suction cups and massaged the poor ham's noggin with them. . . . The Kid was in fine shape, with never a mark on him, but as round followed murderous round the other began to look like something left over till Monday in a Bohunk delicatessen. . . . The fans were screaming for a knockout. . . . Then, sure enough, the Kid got him! Taking strangle holds with two tentacles and cross-buttocks with three more, he dug the remaining three into the gravel and pushed for all he was worth." The big palooka couldn't take it. A few minutes later the Kid was lurching off him down on the bottom. I hope all our wrestler-readers who see this will have the decency to turn quietly to knitting. ERIC.



"I FIND IT PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO SHAKE OFF MY POOR RELATIONS."



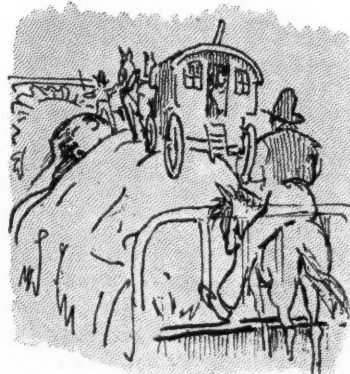
TO ST
BURLINGTON
HOUSE



TO THE
KOSY
TEA SHOPPE



RESTAURANT



Frank Reynolds

How History is Made

WE all felt how natural it was that the Pledges should be excited about the hospital nurse who had looked after young Cyril Pledge when he ran—(at ten miles an hour, sounding his horn, signalling with his trafficator, and on his right side of the road)—into a stone wall and had to be taken in an ambulance to the Cottage Hospital, where he remained unconscious for nearly a month.

Naturally they were excited about Cyril too—in quite a different sort of way—even after they knew he was out of danger. Mrs. Pledge was afraid that the concussion might have affected the boy's mind—and what some of their friends said about that amongst themselves is neither here nor there. Mr. Pledge was mostly concerned about reminding everyone that he'd always said that wall was in the wrong place. But although young Cyril had done a good deal towards moving the wall, it was rebuilt in exactly the same spot as before.

But to return to the hospital nurse.

It was not what you think.

She made no attempt to marry young Cyril, partly for reasons which were obvious to all of us who knew the tiresome boy, and partly no doubt because she was about the same age as

his mother. But it turned out that she had a friend, living just outside Boxhill-on-Sea, who knew an old person who had kept a tobacconist's shop for years and years in one of the better streets of Reading, who could remember the cottage—where the Pledges had been living for the past twenty years only—in the year 1870, when she had been visiting a friend—long since gathered—in the neighbourhood of Little Fiddle-on-the-Green.

And the Pledges said—and everybody agreed with them—how extraordinarily interesting it would be to hear what the cottage had been like long, long ago, before they themselves had improved it by turning the scullery into a bathroom, and throwing out an extra window in the front bedroom, and training a clematis over the dog-kennel.

"Historical, almost," said Mr. Pledge, and, briefly though he had spoken, one knew what he meant.

Mrs. Pledge was, as usual, more explicit, and said what she had often been known to say before—in fact practically every time she entertained visitors.

"Our little home is tiny of course, but the parish register proves that it was in existence quite two hundred and fifty years ago, which lends interest.

Curiously enough, little is known of its history."

So naturally enough they were deeply interested at the prospect of hearing something more about the history of the cottage, even if it was only when and why the pump had been so strangely installed under the staircase.

The difficulty was to get in touch with the old person at Reading, who was reported—on a picture postcard of Canterbury Cathedral sent by the friend of young Cyril's hospital nurse—to be not much of a hand at reading or writing letters.

In the end Mrs. Pledge announced that she saw no reason why she shouldn't break her next journey up to London at Reading.

Even after Mr. Pledge had been induced to overcome his immediate reaction—that the whole thing would mean expenditure of time and money—several months had to elapse, since there was nothing urgent to take Mrs. Pledge to London, the January sales being over and the July ones not yet begun.

However, in time she went, and got it clearly defined by the station-master, two porters, and General Battlegate—who happened to be at the station buying a paper—that it would be *all right* about the ticket if she broke the journey at Reading. Even then, Mrs. Pledge said how surprised she felt when it was all right.

She found the street in Reading—and felt that to call it one of the better streets was rather unfair to the rest of the town—and she found the tobacconist's shop, and she even found the old person actually behind the counter.

Mrs. Pledge frankly admitted that it was difficult to make her errand clear, and that her husband's fears were more or less justified, because it did take a good deal of time and a certain amount of money. (The money was spent on shag tobacco, which was rather a waste because Mr. Pledge is no smoker, but Mrs. Pledge had seen at a glance that it would be of no use to ask for the scented black Caucasian cigarettes that young Cyril says are the only kind he cares to smoke.)

However, in the end they did come to Little Fiddle-on-the-Green and the cottage, metaphorically speaking, and the old person said she remembered it perfectly, and many was the cup of tea she'd been invited to drink there in the good old days.

"I can see it all in me mind's eye," she said, "with the fine entrance-hall, and the gun-room, and the billiard-room, and all."

E. M. D.



"If you're going to speak to father about our engagement, Willie, perhaps you'd better tell him it's Jack I wish to marry."

The Soldiers' Marriage Allowance

A Mother's Protest

I WAS reading my morning paper when young Podgy McSumph rushed into the study.

"Tam Pilkie's maybe to go to the sodjers," he announced breathlessly, "an' this is the letter," waving a sheet of paper.

"What letter?"

"An' Mrs. Pilkie's terrible wild," went on Podgy, "an' she says Tam's no' to get goin' to the sodjers because she won't let him get married."

"Married? What has that got to do with it?"

"Because if Tam goes to the war Mrs. Pilkie says Mary Toddle would marry him for his money."

"Marry him?" I exclaimed.

"Ay," said Podgy, "an' Mrs. Pilkie an' Mrs. Dusty came runnin' in to oor hoose an' told ma mither."

I gathered that the three ladies had proceeded to hold a heated discussion on the subject of the marriage allowance to be paid to the wives of young soldiers, and that Mrs. Pilkie had denounced the Government for offering Mary Toddle "the very chance" she wanted "for to catch" Tom Pilkie.

"An' Mrs. Pilkie said Mary Toddle would get a' the money for Tam bein' at the war an' Mrs. Pilkie would get nae money."

Mrs. Dusty ("She's terrible fat," said Podgy) seemed to have compared Mary Toddle "an' the likes of her" to war profiteers.

"An' that's the letter," said Podgy, handing it over, "an' ye've to see if it's a' right for sendin' to Mr. Spout the M.P."

"Who wrote this, Podgy?"

"It was Mrs. Pilkie, but Mrs. Dusty an' ma mither kept sayin' things she was to put in."

"Mr. Spout, M.P.," the letter ran, "Dear Sir apologising for troubling you at this busy time in the Parliament but if this sort of thing is allowed to go on of our sons that is ready for the army getting caught and married for seventeen shillings a week that we read in the newspapers it is a black burning shame. To think of them that was bairns in knickers it seems only yesterday and sending them to the war was bad enough but giving the chance to these young hoity toities to marry them that hardly ever poached an egg even is the last straw and will not be stood. There is plenty of cases

for to show you the proof. There is one Mary Toddle that is the talk of this place for chasing my son Tom and him as soft as butter for getting himself caught by her. Also a lady friends son that is threatened with one as like as two peas to Mary Toddle and most of her family troubled with fits. No further gone than this morning she said to me it was worse than the war her very words. Also supporting I have Mrs. McSumph and Mrs. Dusty with sons Podgy and Charlie not of ready age so far being five past only but they think the same as me body and soul. Mr. Spout, M.P., bolshies we never shall be and such is the furthest from our thoughts but see our sons getting caught by scheming hoity toities and helped by the government for shame

we never shall except across our dead bodies.

Yours respectfully,
Mary Pilkie (Mrs.)
Martha Dusty (Mrs.)
Helen McSumph (Mrs.)."

"An' is the letter a' right for sendin' to Mr. Spout the M.P.?" asked Podgy. "An' will they no' get put in the polis office for sendin' it?"

"I think it's all right, Podgy."

"Good," said Podgy. "An' Mrs. Pilkie's goin' to send the snap as weel."

"The snap?"

"It's a photy that was took," explained Podgy, "an' ye see in it Mary Toddle walkin' oot wi' Tam Pilkie. An' Mrs. Pilkie says she wants Mr. Spout the M.P. to see Mary Toddle for hisself."

D.



"Yes?"



"Yes, yes, this is Private Whetherstone, 2709385, speaking."

Licensing Justice

Or, Darts and Dominoes

The Chairman speaks:

"WE have considered with paternal care
The applications made to us to-day,
And, with a few exceptions here and there,
We have allowed the applicants their way.
We do not think that any pub is good,
But many of them we forbear to close,
Provided it be clearly understood
That we will *not* have darts or dominoes.

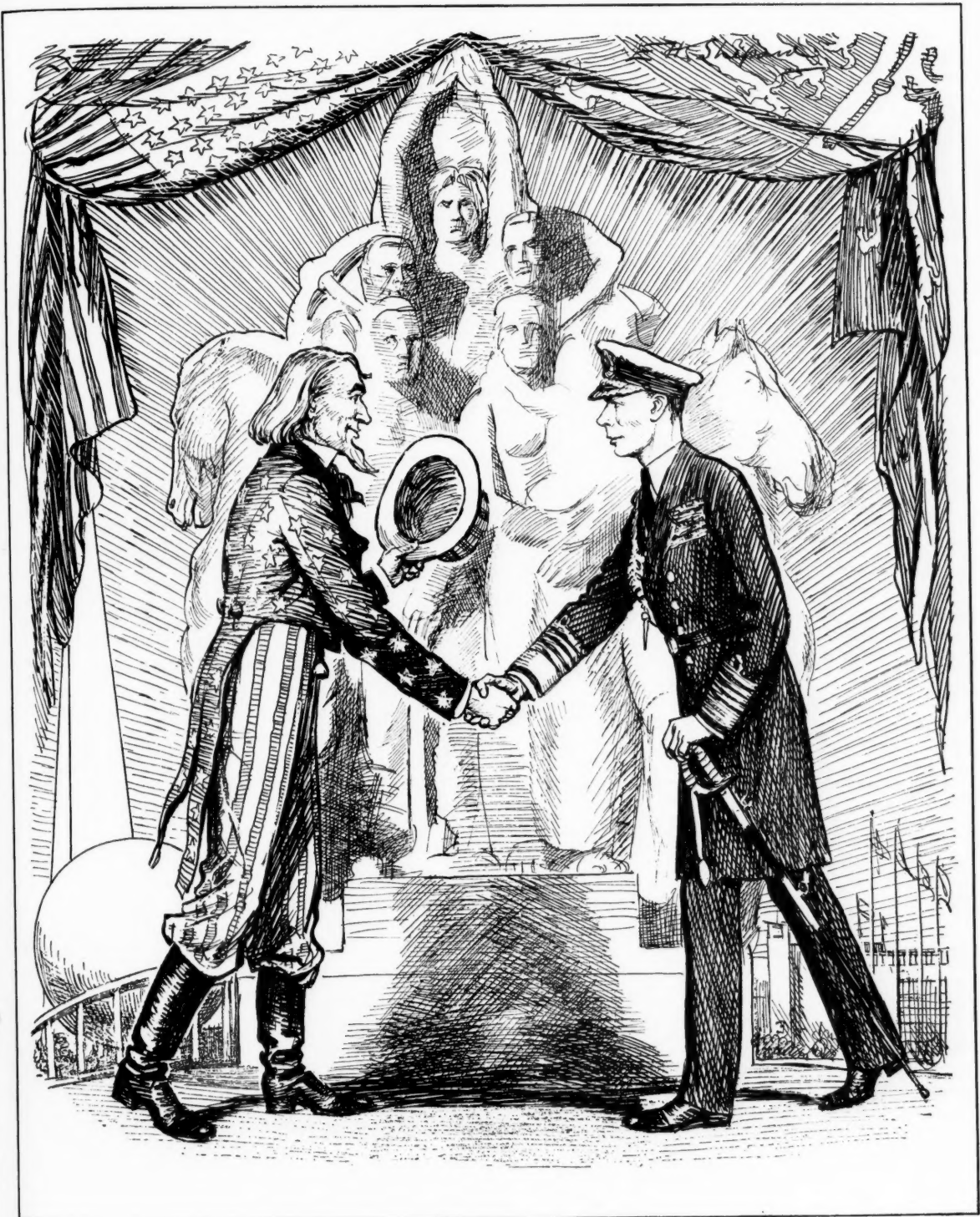
We understand that at 'The Horse and Hound,'
'The Duke of Rutland' and 'The Ship in Flames,'
'The Bull,' 'The Mitre', and 'The Barge Aground'
Are men addicted to these awful games;
They play backgammon in 'The English Rose,'
While chess is practised at 'The Queen of Hearts,'
And at 'The Bear' both darts and dominoes.
We don't approve of dominoes or darts.

They knock down skittles at 'The Dog and Quail'
Instead of drinking spirits all the time;
Nor once or twice in our rough island tale
Have skittles been the precedent to crime;

And though such games are not by law tabooed
The licensees will prudently suppose
That licences will never be renewed
Where men have played at darts or dominoes.

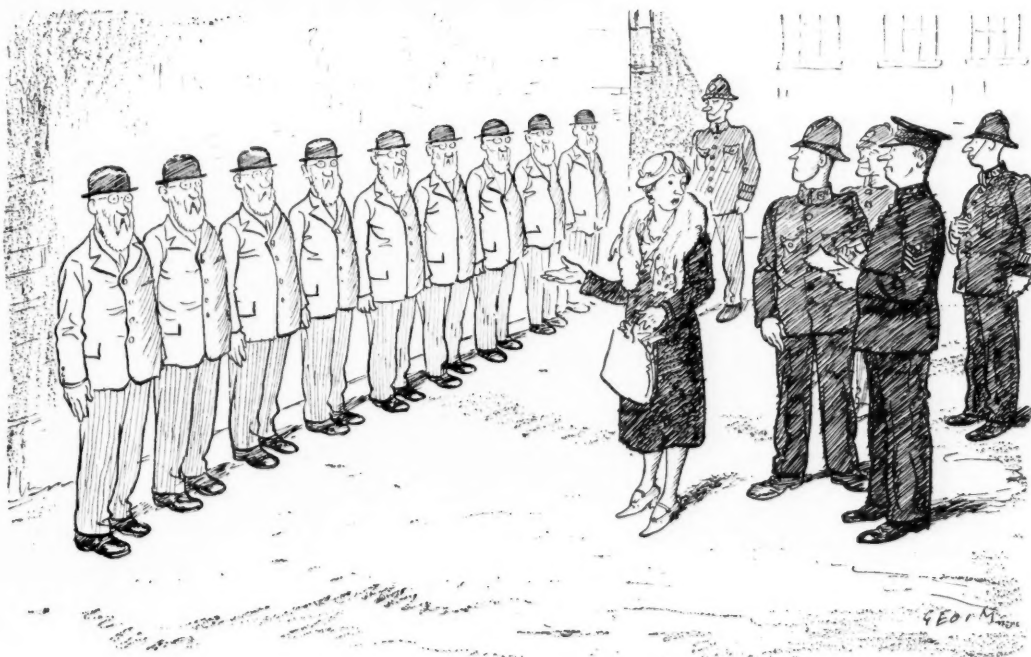
We do not like the horrid drinking class
Who go to inns for nothing but the drinks,
But let no inn distract them from the glass
With Snakes-and-Ladders, Draughts, or Tiddley-Winks;
We snort indignantly when men repeat
The tyrannies that reign in foreign parts,
And all young men should fight for their defeat;
But they must *not* play dominoes or darts.

We have our golf, we have our clubs and cars,
We have our gardens, and our cellars too.
We never wish to sit about in bars,
And cannot understand why people do.
We are not logical, but we don't care;
We act unlawfully, but then, who knows?
We are up here, and you are all down there—
SO THERE WILL NOT BE DARTS OR DOMINOES." A. P. H.



PEACE-BUILDERS OF THE FUTURE

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"I think the third from the left. But I can't be certain until I hear him speak."

The Sleep of the Just

WE in Gampford sleep pretty soundly in our beds at nights—the result not only of a clear conscience but also of our habit of fortifying ourselves with a heavy meal before retiring. Nevertheless we argue that the makers of the "Last Trump" Air-raid Siren ought to have taken that into account when they accepted the corporation contract for supplying the city. Night after night their sirens were tested, and night after night they failed to disturb the peaceful slumbers of the citizens of Gampford, with the result that Gampford Corporation very properly refused delivery and the manufacturers most improperly took their case to Gampford Assizes. And thus was the stage set for the argument of that interesting legal point as to whether or not it was humanly possible to rouse a native of Gampford once he had gone to sleep.

As all the world knows, or at any rate as all of Gampford knows, Mr. Justice Hitchcock found in favour of the manufacturers; but we have an uneasy suspicion that the learned

judge was biased, for the roots of the case extend a good deal further than was ever revealed in court. In fact if you really get down to first causes they extend back to the day, shortly after the war, when Mr. Edwin Robson, the soap manufacturer, died, deeply lamented by all.

After that sad event there were some who argued that the best thing to do with his house would be to pull it down and start afresh on the same site. The city of Gampford possesses many notable eyesores but none so remarkable as The Grange, a house which, according to the current *Gampford Guide*, is a symphony in stone containing all the more delightful architectural features of every age. Its chimneys look like wrinkled stockings after a fashion believed to have been favoured by the Elizabethans; its plate-glass windows were copied from those which had proved so satisfactory in the late Mr. Robson's soap works; its attached conservatory is a model of the Crystal Palace, of which Mr. Robson was a great

admirer. And it is so heavily fortified with battlements and turrets that a few capable archers would be able, should the need ever arise, to defend it indefinitely against all comers.

But possibly its most outstanding feature is the structure looking like a large hen-house on the top of the mediæval keep, and built to contain the organ on which the late Mrs. Robson was wont to entertain her friends and herself. As an organist Mrs. Robson was notable for the frequency with which she produced lost chords, and it was possibly felt that by placing her organ at the top of the keep, not only would she be as near the angels (who are reputed to enjoy such music) as one can conveniently get in Gampford, but also she could produce as many lost chords as she liked without causing Mr. Robson, safe in his study on the ground-floor, to feel weary and ill at ease.

And so, taken by and large, it was not the sort of house that everyone would wish to own. As the house-agents informed the relatives after the



"All very fine for you, Dad, you've retired. You just try living in 1939."

decease, it would be necessary to wait for a special purchaser; and they advertised it as a desirable and commodious residence standing in its own grounds, thus giving the impression that it was only by a singularly lucky chance that it was not standing in someone else's grounds. But they did so without very much hope.

However, it happens that there is a strong feeling in Gampford City Council that no one ought to be allowed to live in a large house, because that is just what makes for class distinctions and the like. And the only way they can prevent such an undesirable state of affairs is to buy up all large houses as soon as they come into the market, a process which comes expensive for the ratepayers, but which is viewed with great approval by the owners of Gampford's more prominent eyesores. And thus it was that The Grange, to the delighted surprise of the house-agents and the relatives of the late Mr. Robson, passed into the possession of Gampford Corporation.

But it proved easier to buy the house than to decide what to do with it afterwards. For a time arguments raged through the Council Chamber on whether it should be turned into a public park or a site for a corporation housing estate, but the arguments gradually died away and the house remained empty and deserted, while the model Crystal Palace was used as a calibration range by small boys with catapults. And so ultimately this one-time desirable residence was declared to be unfit for human habitation, and then it was that the City Council decided instead to turn it into a habitation for His Majesty's Judges of Assize.

Great was the approval of the citizens of Gampford over this wise and far-sighted decision. The existing Judges' Lodging was a dingy mansion in the centre of the town, sadly out of keeping with the dignity of the King's direct representatives. And anyhow the site was wanted for road widening. Here in the comparatively sylvan

surroundings of The Grange they would be able to enjoy that rest and quiet which they had a right to expect. And so at length the day came when the Judges of the Summer Assizes entered upon their new inheritance. The High Sheriff's car conveyed them to the door; police stood on guard at the gates. The history of The Grange had reached a new and yet more glorious page.

The first fly appeared in the ointment at about seven P.M., when Mr. Justice Hitchcock proposed to take a bath. His design was frustrated by the fact that the bathroom taps would produce nothing but a thin dribble of rusty-looking liquid; and the Judge came down to dinner in a mood which filled the two young and nervous marshals with the gravest apprehension. One of them was told to go to the telephone and stay there until he had got a corporation engineer to look at the water supply, and the other one decided that the extremely amusing story with which he had been intending

to entertain their lordships at dinner had better be postponed for a more suitable occasion.

The corporation officials acted with commendable promptitude. Before dinner was over a gang of men had arrived and had discovered that there was more about the water supply than had met their eye before. The Grange being situated at the top of a hill, the town pressure had to be supplemented by means of a ram in the basement, and it was out of order. They adjusted it as it had never been adjusted before; the bathroom taps produced a gush of water that nearly blew the bottom out of the bath; their lordships were informed that all was now well, and the engineers took their departure.

That night, to the relief of the marshals, Mr. Justice Hitchcock retired early to his room in the mediaeval keep, announcing that it would be a great pleasure to have a really quiet night for once. But, alas! strange forces were at work in the long-dormant anatomy of The Grange. The corporation engineers had failed to note that the ram in the basement had another function besides that of providing bath-water; it produced also the motive power for the organ above the keep. And many things had happened to that organ during its long period of inactivity. Rust and mildew had attacked it; mice had burrowed about in its interior; the birds of the air had built their nests in its pipes. So perhaps it was not surprising that, under the strain of a water pressure that it had never known before, something burst.

At about midnight Mr. Justice Hitchcock was roused from sleep by a piercing eldritch shriek, all on one note, coming from above his head and going on and on. His brother judge, the two marshals, the butler and various other members of the staff flocked to the scene of what they feared was some ghastly tragedy. The room above, they found, was locked and no one knew anything about the key. On the instructions of Mr. Justice Hitchcock the two marshals and the butler broke down the door and were confronted by the organ blaring forth its single note of protest; but all attempts to stop it were in vain. The only result of their wrenching at various pipes and levers was to set off two more notes in a resounding continuous chord more lost than anything that the late Mrs. Robson had ever been able to produce.

Meanwhile Mr. Justice Hitchcock himself was busy dialling away on the telephone, ready and willing to sum up his opinion to anyone who could be

found to listen. But there was no reply from any corporation department or living quarter. For a time he buoyed himself up with the thought that the fire brigade, the police, and the neighbours would inevitably be summoned by the hideous noise proceeding from The Grange. But gradually that hope too died. Gampford had retired to rest and the noise had no effect at all on their slumbers. His Majesty's Judges of Assize spent the rest of the night with their heads wrapped round with sheets, dozing fitfully, and dreaming of blood-curdling murders. And at seven o'clock in the morning when the police arrived on duty at The Grange there came a thunderous knocking at the door and a constable inquired whether anyone knew that the organ at the top of the house was playing.

That morning it was noted that Mr. Justice Hitchcock was somewhat irritable in court. He listened almost with impatience while Mr. Ratcliffe Goodbody, K.C., appearing for Gampford Corporation on a question of A.R.P. sirens, explained that the citizens of Gampford slept with one ear constantly open and that any noise which failed to wake them must be feeble indeed. And it seemed to unbiased observers that he turned a much more favourable ear to the opposing counsel, who argued that it was beyond the wit of man to produce a noise loud enough to wake a Gampford citizen. And, as I say, the Corporation lost the case; but one wonders sometimes whether the Judge was influenced by evidence not produced in court.

H. W. M.



Retaliation

At the Play

"OF MICE AND MEN" (APOLLO)

I ALWAYS dread seeing the stage versions of books which I have very much enjoyed; and so in honesty I must say about this play that I cannot remember any more successful dramatisation.

MR. JOHN STEINBECK'S story, which took America by storm, and even shook the book-shelves of this country, went deeper and got further in the writer's job of revealing human nature than most of its fatter brethren which have moved the pundits to immoderate ecstasies. It went straight for the subject of loneliness like a terrier and bit hard from the beginning, with an exquisite economy of sentiment which allowed it to expose the most intimate feelings of simple people with never a touch of the maudlin. Here is the whole essence of the book transferred without evaporation or dilution, here are *Lennie* and *George* exactly as they appeared in its pages, and here even is the same end, out in the wood by the river, and still the purest tragedy. MR. STEINBECK has written the play himself, and has scored a double triumph.

The curtain goes up on the two men settling down in the wood for the night. *George*, the little, sharp, bright man, is almost a nurse to *Lennie*, huge and gentle and half-witted. *Lennie* makes life nearly insupportable for *George*, yet *George* cannot be without him. *George* is so devoted to his friend that when his nerves are cracking he still takes him in tow, paving his blundering way with excuses, schooling him in the things he mustn't do or say, watching him like a cat to stave off the beginnings of disaster. *Lennie's* mistakes have made them hobos; his strength is so prodigious that any farmer welcomes him at first, but it is also his weakness, for he has a passion for fondling small smooth creatures who seldom survive his crushing endearments. There is always a

dead mouse in his pocket, and there is always the danger, very real to *George*, that a girl's silky hair will prove irresistible to his vast fingers, that the girl will scream, and that in terror his fingers will close too tightly.



GEORGE SCENTS DANGER

<i>Lennie</i>	MR. NIALL MACGINNIS
<i>George</i>	MR. JOHN MILLS
<i>Curley's Wife</i>	MISS CLAIRE LUCE



THE INSEPARABLES

<i>Candy</i>	MR. SYDNEY BENSON
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In the first scene, as they camp near the farm where they are starting work next morning, *George* glories in his last night of freedom in the open air, and *Lennie* makes him describe for the hundredth time the little place they are going to take when they have saved some money—a cottage and a few acres of alfalfa where *Lennie* can keep rabbits and there will be no master but themselves. If *Lennie* can behave himself for only a short time they can do it.

But *Lennie* can't. At the farm (very well recreated by MR. GOWER PARKS) there is a lonely blonde married to the son of the boss and crazy to get back to town. Her husband, in a mad mood of jealousy, picks a quarrel with *Lennie*, who maims him in a moment; and then it all happens as *George* has feared. The girl tries to seduce *Lennie*, in all innocence he strokes her hair; she screams; she is dead. *Lennie* goes off to the wood; and there, while the man-hunt approaches, *George* comes to him and, describing for the last time the little haven they will buy, fires a merciful bullet.

To this unforgettable end the play moves quickly in a series of tersely-written commentaries on its main theme of loneliness. The scene in the bunk-house when the men have persuaded old *Candy* to let them shoot his ancient dog is very good indeed, and so is that in which the crippled negro is at home. There is not an inch of padding in any of the dialogue.

The casting is wonderfully accurate. MR. JOHN MILLS gives *George* just the quality of nervous intensity which is wanted, MR. NIALL MACGINNIS plays the childish mountain (*ridiculus mus* in pocket) so that *Lennie* is always lovable and never silly. These are both notable performances. MISS CLAIRE LUCE cleverly brings out the vamp's unhappiness, and the men on the farm are all well taken.

MR. NORMAN MARSHALL must be given credit not only for so good a production but for having launched the play at the Gate. ERIC.

"ONLY YESTERDAY" (PLAYHOUSE)

AFTER thinking, up to August 4th, 1914, that war with Germany, a country with which they have special ties, would be incredible, the quiet and well-to-do Villiers family have to accept it, and most of the evening at The Playhouse is passed in watching them accept the war as a disagreeable and obtrusive newcomer in their well-ordered lives. *Sir Francis* (Mr. H. G. STOKER) becomes a special policeman, his able chauffeur, *Marshall* (Mr. COLIN KEITH-JOHNSTON), becomes a major, the only son, *Robin* (Mr. DAVID MARKHAM), is killed at the front at the end of the Second Act. If this family has an experience outside the common run, it is the marriage, after the Armistice, of the daughter of the house to the erstwhile chauffeur.

This is the sort of play which would, I suppose, have done better in a less familiar setting. I think we might have watched a play about MARLBOROUGH'S armies or the Napoleonic War with less of the impatience which the slow development and the absence of anything more than a straightforward narrative induces. The dramatist can be seen all the way through fighting the temptation to liven his theme by underlining the mild foibles of his characters. Little laughs come when *Sir Francis Villiers* has trouble with his policeman's boots; when *Marshall*, for all his gathering cluster of military ribbons, and substantive rank of major, finds old habits still too strong and cannot sit down in the presence of the family whose guest he is as a wounded officer, because he always remembers that he used to be the chauffeur.

The trouble is that this light relief would very quickly and easily ruin the play. *Sir Francis*, after at first disliking the unequal marriage, thinks better of it during the first two minutes' silence in November, 1919, and gives his full consent, which he could not have done to our satisfaction if *Marshall* had not been kept as an extremely competent and level-headed fellow, except for this unwillingness to be at his ease. So we are left to make the

best of Miss IRENE VANBRUGH as the mother. Every time she comes on it is to find someone unexpected in the room and she has her charming moments of surprise and welcome, and her great moment of tragedy when the telegram comes with news of her son's death.



PRESCRIPTION FOR TIRED FEET

Marshall MR. COLIN KEITH-JOHNSTON
Robin Villiers MR. DAVID MARKHAM
Sir Francis Villiers. MR. H. G. STOKER



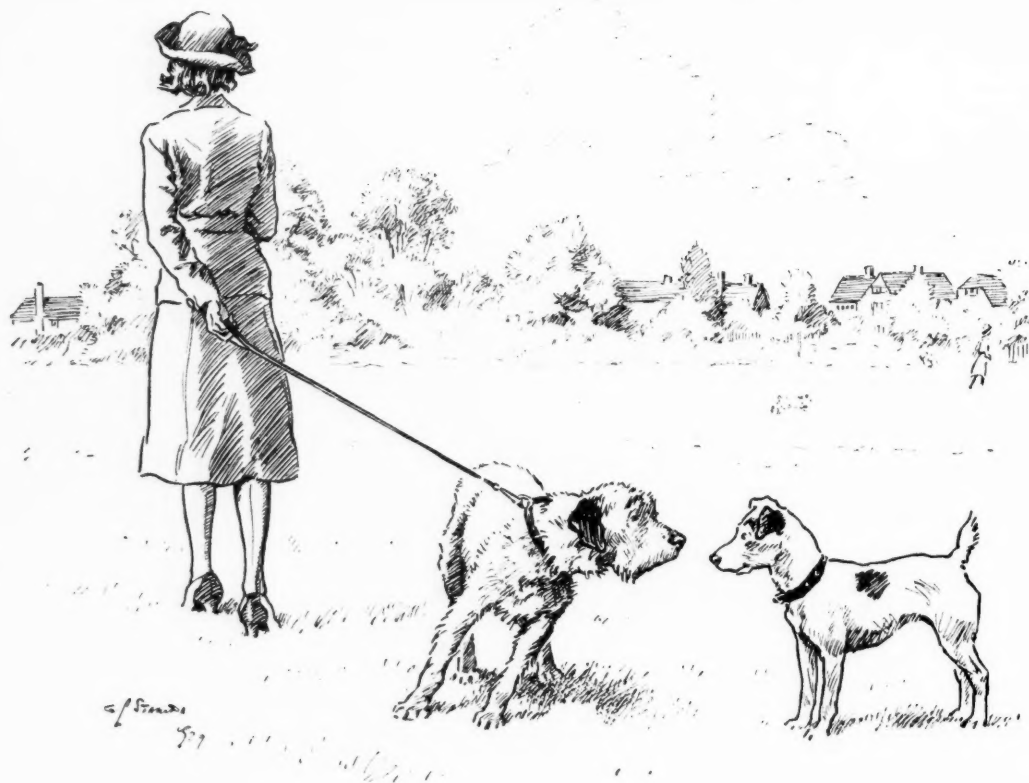
BACK FROM THE BARGAIN BASEMENT

Anne Villiers MISS DOROTHY HYSON
Lady Villiers MISS IRENE VANBRUGH

But the general poverty is such that we welcome the moments when *Ned Matthews* (Mr. ROGER MAXWELL), a well-to-do business man of a futile and verbose type, is amusing us with his *Mark Tapley* optimism and his belief that everything is going to be all right in next to no time. The *Villiers* family have never known anything like the war, but it does not succeed in ageing or changing any of them, and we are left with a clear impression that all the scars will heal. We feel very much the absence of any background to their lives. *Sir Francis Villiers* lives in Westminster, but we get no hint that he has other friends or interests than *Ned Matthews*, and there is a conspicuous absence of any outside echoes—unless noises like a tom-tom drum during an air-raid warning be so classified—of friends, relations and the generally larger setting in which their lives would, in fact, have been lived.

A play about the years 1914-18 is not easily carried by the period. The actors in this one are a highly competent cast, but they all have to be well-mannered and conventional in order to show us a representative household, and that is just what is not sufficient for entertainment. The son *Robin* does indeed contract a secret marriage with a French girl, but all this happens through

his letters. In all that we see of him he is a very ordinary young man who, as he gathers secrets, keeps them very closely to himself. There is a butler, *Layton* (Mr. TOWNSEND WHITLING), with a powerful face, of whom at the very beginning we have some expectations; but beyond sparring in polite dumb show about the position of the tobacco-jar, and expressing well-bred surprise when ordered to lay a place at table for *Marshall*, he is merely part of the stage setting; and he is symbolical of the evening. Miss DOROTHY HYSON makes some fiery speeches at the beginning, for she is about to become an active suffragette. Mr. BRYAN COLEMAN gives a good study of a young German of the upper-class, stiff and correct, but genuinely friendly. Miss IRENE VANBRUGH, of course, steers her comedy with deftness and grace through the narrow channels provided for it. D. W.



"Spoils my walk, having to keep her on the lead all the time."

The Anxious Client and the High-Class Solicitor

AN Anxious Client one day had occasion to visit a High-Class Solicitor for the purpose of eliciting from him a measure of legal advice on a matter of urgent importance. He found his way with some difficulty through a network of primordial arches and ancient Inns to the crumbling but historic edifice within whose discreet walls the pick of profligate peers and prodigious peeresses had for generations laid bare its secret sins and awful overdraughts. The Anxious Client entered a broken portico and, climbing somewhat unsteadily up a dark but Jacobean stairway, banged his head on a low oak beam, disturbed a quantity of verminous vellum, tripped over an unexpected but early-Tudor bump in the floor and was precipitated into the arms of a mid-Victorian clerk who was playing cats'-cradles with some pink tape. The mid-Victorian clerk led the Anxious Client silently and with much old-world courtesy into a panelled waiting-room, which was furnished with a partially decomposed chair and a calendar for 1903. Here the Anxious Client remained for an indefinite period, but was eventually escorted up some antique and narrow stairs from over whose sides innumerable battered tin boxes inscribed with defunct but impressive titles hung precariously and threatened to engulf him. The Anxious Client was by this time palpitating with such nervous apprehension that in the

oscillations of his upward march he unwittingly dislodged "The Duchess of Dinwiddie and Exors.," which came tumbling from its ancestral perch, draping him with the dust of ages. Amidst this clatter of crashing aristocracy the Anxious Client was ushered into an imposing Queen Anne apartment of enormous dimensions, with its walls thick with old masters and the High-Class Solicitor himself sitting at a massive table in the middle-distance. The High-Class Solicitor appeared to be engrossed in a telephone conversation of the highest importance, but he was good enough to motion the Anxious Client into a deep but extremely uncomfortable seat on the opposite side of the table, which was piled so high with antediluvian affidavits, worthless wills and rotten writs that the High-Class Solicitor's view of the Anxious Client was entirely impeded. By a considerable feat of memory, however, when at long last the telephone conversation had been concluded, the High-Class Solicitor remembered the presence of the Anxious Client and with much condescension asked him the object of his visit. The Anxious Client was just on the point of concluding his first sentence when the telephone rang and the High-Class Solicitor was asked to speak to Mr. Tuttlebury, of Tuttlebury, Cyst and Tuttlebury, in the matter of Prunella Lady Bramble, and from what the

Anxious Client could gather in the course of this interruption the case was somewhat spicy. When about half an hour later the Anxious Client had proceeded a little further into the sordid details of his case, the senior partner descended upon the High-Class Solicitor and held him in earnest conversation on a matter which appeared to be of vital moment, but which from the few words that reached his ears the Anxious Client was surprised to gather largely concerned either birds or food or both. Fortunately the senior partner was forced by some obscure but apparently urgent necessity summarily to terminate his visit, and the Anxious Client was able to continue the development of his case for four-and-a-half minutes. At this point Sir Aaron Fizzle came on the phone with regard to Viscountess Gamp v. Kensington Gas Works, and prevented the Anxious Client from reaching the crucial point where his wife had left him and his case really became worthy of the High-Class Solicitor's attention. Before he could resume, moreover, the managing clerk came in to say that the Lord Bishop of Prestwood had called unexpectedly, would not be put off, and was pacing up and down the waiting-room like an ecclesiastical beast of prey. The High-Class Solicitor begged the Anxious Client to excuse him for a few moments and left the room. After this interruption the Anxious Client was just about to come to the point when the senior partner in the room above stumbled over a bundle of briefs, crashed heavily on the floor and loosed a large piece of Adam ceiling upon the head of the Anxious

Client, reducing him to such a lamentable state of incapacity that the High-Class Solicitor very thoughtfully suggested a further interview for the following week when the consultation might be continued.

Moral: BE ADVISED.

Soho

I CANNOT say what verdant valley bore thee,
I cannot guess what dryad wished thee well,
Child of the sunlight, onyx-eyed and swarthy,
Nursed in what cradle I cannot tell;
Fragrant Illyria, Aetna the flowery,
Dark-green Dodona by the groves divine—
Was it Ambracia or was it the Bowery,
O thou moustachio'd stout Levantine?
Much hast thou eaten and thou canst not pay for it,
Tall is the waiter and his voice is loud;
Oh, if thou art some goddess's favourite
Will she envelop thee swift in a cloud?
Will she appear descending where the bill is,
Shower thee with gold, or Plenty and Increase,
Save the successor of Ajax and Achilles?—
No, she is mute; they are calling the police.



"Stowaway, Sir. He's been hiding in the gymnasium all the week."

American Slang

A Glossary for Elder Readers

IT is with particular eagerness that I take my place at the head of the safari to-day, because I've a feeling I'm going to be a

Ball of fire. One who is in excellent form; one who, to define it appropriately, is hot stuff. When you are a ball of fire you never

Lay an egg. Tell a joke or make a quip which fails to get a laugh, which falls flat. Judging by surface indications, I should say that if a ball of fire ever did lay an egg it would undoubtedly be ready to serve, don't you imagine? When a person lays an egg it is proper to say that both he and his joke are

Strictly from hunger. Pretty bad; in fact terrible. The "strictly" is optional. For example, you might say: "As a poet, Shakespeare's from hunger." Of course you'd be wrong, since Shakespeare happens to be a pip of a poet, but then you've been wrong before, haven't you? (William Shakespeare—remember? He was one of

the collaborators on Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*.) When a comedian in a show is from hunger the audience usually

Sits on its hands. Doesn't clap. On the other hand, if he's a ball of fire he may carry the whole show along with him to success and thus become the show's

Meal ticket. The person who can be depended on to put the show across and draw crowds to the theatre, thus assuring his colleagues of three square meals a day. In sports the member of a team who can be depended on to win games for the team is sometimes referred to as its meal ticket. Needless to say, a meal ticket is never a

Stumblebum. A weaving, shuffle-footed drunk. Stumblebums are to be seen in large numbers in towns which are full of

Visiting firemen. Men gathered for a convention, whether they be salesmen, business-men, real-estate agents, social organisation members, or even

firemen. When men gather for a convention they usually spend their evenings

On the town. Having a good time, painting the town red. In the course of events they generally visit all the local

Clip joints. Outrageously expensive night-clubs, places of entertainment whose sole aim seems to be to clip you (fleece you; *syn.*: trim you) and leave you denuded of cash. *Syn.*: gyp joints. The type of person who patronises these places is the sort who would rush to buy a genuine fourteen-carat

Crovenay. Don't you know what a crovenay is? Well, you shouldn't, because it is a word which has no meaning. It is used in conversation to trip up persons who pretend to be well-informed concerning everything which is mentioned, whether they really know anything about it or not. For example, suppose you are wearing a fur coat and Mrs. Whinney (whom you know to be a phoney of the most fraudulent variety) asks: "What sort of fur is that?" you may reply, "Why, it's Norwegian crovenay," whereupon, if the trap works, Mrs. Whinney will whinny brightly, "Why, of course! I knew I recognised it. I had one just like it three years ago." Then you might say, "I've always wondered what the difference is between Norwegian crovenay and Russian crovenay—I've never seen any Russian. Do you know?" Thus assured that you know nothing about the subject, Mrs. Whinney will as likely as not proceed to explain that Russian crovenay is darker and more lustrous, and come to think of it her coat was Russian crovenay, not Norwegian like yours. Hence, this word comes as a handy thing to have around the house with which to spot phoneys. A mere mention of a genuine Crovenay etching, and your average phoney will be off on a discourse on the art of Jean Baptiste Crovenay (*circa* 1781-1836)—"He did most of his best things in the last decade of the eighteenth century, as I recall, etc." Of course if you want to, after you have your phoney well involved you can easily expose him, whereupon everybody present will probably gather around and

Break it off in him. Chaff him mercilessly; knife him in the back and break it off in him, so to speak. This also can take the meaning of outwitting someone to his discomfiture. And now, leaving the figuratively lacerated body of the phoney behind us on the floor, let us steal away like so many Roman senators and hurry to the nearest pier of the realm, because



"So you're a patriot! How amusing!"

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"Look, Mummy, he's going to bed."

we've just time left for a brief nautical outing. First of all I'll slip into my rear-admiral's uniform—it's really just my front-admiral's uniform worn backwards—and then we'll all board my flagship, H.M.S. *Bunting*, and steam to Annapolis, Md., U.S.A., where the U.S. Naval Academy is located. Here we find young midshipmen hard at work studying to master the intricacies of such naval manoeuvres as the hornpipe and the jig, and in their spare moments these young men have created from odds and ends of tar and oakum and bits of old rope a few slang terms of their own. Midshipmen, for example, are generally dressed in

Blou and trou. Blouse and trousers. Having a hearty appetite, the average Joe Gish (nickname for any midshipman) shows a lively interest in anything edible, from seagull (chicken) to Shiverin' Liz in a snowstorm (gelatine dessert topped with whipped cream). When a Joe Gish is at the table and a shipmate cries, "Man overboard!" he

does not leap up and rush out for a life-preserver, since in the circumstances this warning means something far more serious—it means that he has left his spoon in his coffee-cup and had better fish it out at once. One shudders to think how a Joe Gish would feel if he were guilty of having a man overboard some night while dining with his

O.A.O. One And Only. In case you wonder, an example of a Joe Gish's O.A.O. is that wide-eyed creature over there who's wearing that lovely exotic

Foo foo. Perfume. Unfortunately, her particular Joe Gish is

Anchor man. Lowest man in his class. In fact he's unsat (not passing) and is likely any day now to be posted on the

Tree. The list of the failing. Nevertheless, this didn't keep him, at the time of the last dance, from being a member of the

Flying Squadron. The last ten men to get in after a dance. Not every Joe

Gish has an O.A.O., to be sure. Some of them are

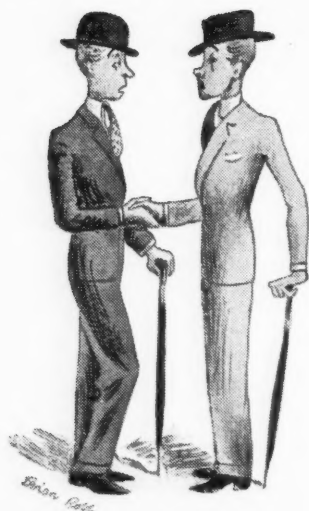
Red Mikes. Women-haters. Considering all these things, we see that it becomes quite possible for an O.A.O. to sit down with her Joe Gish—a reformed Red Mike—and have Shiverin' Liz while chatting with Holy Joe (the chaplain), which makes a very pretty picture. So let's leave them that way and hurry back to the good old *Bunting* and sail away home again. Oh, into the nest we go. Move over, Mr. Crow; let's go punting in the *Bunting* on the Thames! Oh, yo ho—Good heavens! Do you know what? I forgot to gas up our old battle-wagon before we left, so it looks as though everyone will have to paddle with his hands from here on home. Isn't that just like me?

o o

Always Considerate

"The bride, who was given away with hat and accessories to match."

Buenos Aires Paper.



"I've just had an enormous and quite uneatable lunch."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Emigré du Monde

THERE are perhaps three effective approaches to a biography of the much-biographed *Chateaubriand* (MACMILLAN, 12/6): that of a fellow-romantic and a fellow-poet—this, unluckily, he never gets; the caustic condescending modern touch with which M. MAUROIS handled poor RENÉ last year; or a reasonably annotated and amplified story based on CHATEAUBRIAND'S own voluminous memoirs, which is the method chosen by Miss JOAN EVANS. Her gravest disqualification for the biographer's part is a certain lack of feeling for the boy RENÉ and his Brittany. She misses the glamour of both and stresses a squalid aspect that undoubtedly co-existed. Even CHATEAUBRIAND'S famous tribute to the Breton spring—its gorse, its nightingales, its apple-trees abloom like a village bride's wedding bouquet—is ignored. It is the Celt and the *croyant* in both child and man that hold the clue to CHATEAUBRIAND'S enchantment—an enchantment which has survived posterity's quite legitimate disgust with the aberrations of his long disordered life. Where Miss EVANS scores, and scores highly, is in her clever, careful and sympathetic account of CHATEAUBRIAND the politician—that strange blend of Royalist and Republican whose diplomatic path was so thorny and whose worldly failure so inevitable.

For Countrymen and Others

All those for whom the country scene
Has more than merely passing charm
Will love the insight deep and keen
Of ADRIAN BELL'S *The Shepherd's Farm*;
Those, on the other hand, who claim
That old SAM JOHNSON'S word is true—
That all green fields are much the same—
May pass it by. They oughtn't to.

The yarn indeed is slight enough—
A shepherd's working days which lead
Through ups and down, through smooth and rough,
To ownership of stock and mead;
But there's a wealth of rural lore,
A sense of nature as she lives
That lift it into something more
Than common country narratives.

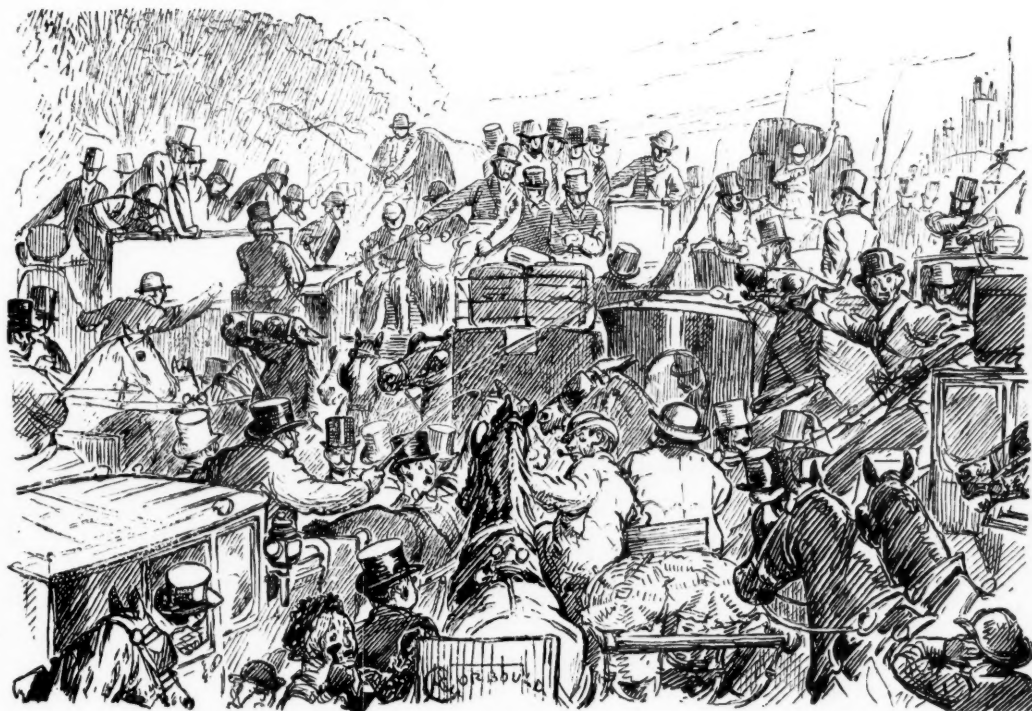
Our farmer's friends and what they say
"Of little and immediate things,"
The horses, cattle, sheep that play
Their parts in his adventurings,
His fostering of the land to hail
The changing seasons as they run—
All blend in this delightful tale
From Mr. CORDEN-SANDERSON.

China Under the Harrow

It is perhaps a mistake, if a generous one, to exhibit both your magic and its mechanism on the same occasion. Mrs. ELIZABETH FOREMAN LEWIS, who has already given European children three charming Chinese story-books, preludes each of her new tales for their elders with a general study of the class most salient in its sequel. Merchants, artisans, coolies, scholars, clerks, beggars, postmen, women and children, each is represented rather by a composite portrait than by a drawing from the life; and this semi-scientific approach, cumbered by the emotional accessories of the story-teller, is equally hard on the story and the facts. Here, however, you have the valiant integrity of business-men and craftsmen faced with war, famine and floods; the austere dignity of the scholar—even a scholar kidnapped and made to haul ships up the Yangtze rapids; the guile of beggars as youthful as *Clever Eel*; the devotion of postmen like *Chen*, who bore another man's mail through a district ravaged by cholera. The great soul of China, the



"There's something awful I must get off my chest."



METROPOLITAN PRIZE PUZZLES

JUNE. NEAR THE MARBLE ARCH. Puzzle—To find the Policeman

A. C. Corbould, June 9th, 1883

brutal soullessness of her foes, "the short-legged ones," both are displayed—piece-meal, it may be, but poignantly—in *Portraits from a Chinese Scroll* (HARRAP, 8/6).

An Expert Looks at the World.

Sir ARTHUR SALTER has been a public servant (and a distinguished one), so naturally he has an orderly mind. And he is a Member of Parliament, so naturally he has an inquiring mind. Both these characteristics are in evidence in *Security, Can We Retrieve It?* (MACMILLAN, 8/6). This is a pamphlet, if a book of four hundred pages can so be called—a "tract for the times," at any rate—in which the events and influences which have brought the world at large, and Europe in particular, to their present unsatisfactory and perilous state are carefully analysed, and a plan is put forward in considerable detail for bringing things into better case. We all of us, or very nearly all of us, aspire to a régime of peace soundly based on universal

justice, but Sir ARTHUR SALTER is not content with aspiration. His proposals are concrete and precise, and they boldly embrace the most difficult problems, as, for instance, that of the colonies. He faces without flinching the paradox, so troublesome to weaker spirits, that democracy, in the cause of self-preservation, must sacrifice no small part of those liberties for which it must prepare itself to fight. In his criticism of individuals he is drastic but never unfair; and if his pen is less lively than that of Mr. MAYNARD KEYNES or Mr. NICOLSON, he has a gift for lucid exposition and cogent argument which commands respect if not always exact agreement.

Fifty Years of a Family

Family Album (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/6) contains the portraits, singly or in groups, of Mrs. Albert Brunswick, her descendants to the third generation, various connections by marriage and a widening circle of acquaintances. All

are dated (the first, 1887) and all the subjects are dressed in the costume appropriate to their year and posed against the appropriate background. To abandon a trail of metaphor started by a happily-chosen title, Mr. HUMPHREY PAKINGTON, in the earlier chapters of his latest book, is a little too conscientiously "period." One is getting rather tired of the guying of the manners and customs, the snobberies and fatuities of the Victorians, though Mr. PAKINGTON does it with a pretty and a witty touch; just as one has read about a sufficiency of death-defying matriarchs, though *Mrs. Brunswick* is a comparatively inoffensive example of the species. But these things are less than the half of a novel which improves and deepens as it goes on, the heart and best part of which is the love-story of *Mrs. Brunswick's* favourite grandson, *Johnny Bartlett*—the story, that is, of his love for *Sally Soames* and of his cousin *Ellen Laphorn's* love for him. It is a story of tragedy and consolation told with insight and delicacy and with a humour more subtle than that which abounds in its setting. Incidentally the book contains a fine description of the Battle of the Falkland Islands. *Johnny* was there, and so was Mr. PAKINGTON.

A Little Girl Lost

One feels that *Portrait of Stella Benson* (MACMILLAN, 15/-) is hardly fair to the woman whose twenty-five letters come as the pleasant shock of its appendix. For although he very soundly insists that his subject was that most typical of our native exports, the English eccentric—in the direct line, so to speak, of HESTER STANHOPE—Mr. R. ELLIS ROBERTS appears chiefly to prize her as a coterie figure, a valuable chip of the old Bloomsbury block unfortunately mislaid in China. He is interested—but not infectiously so—in her rather tedious brand of feminism; and her heroic work for the child-prostitutes of Hong Kong is handled less as a burning championship of the small victims than as a nasty rebuff for "this particular enclosure of British satraps." Despite—and because of—ill-health, STELLA BENSON was something of a spoilt child, a child to whom the just inaccessible was often the one thing necessary. She asked for solitude and when it came she candidly admitted that she missed her audience. Her physical courage, her aristocratic generosity and her honesty in facing the incoherence of her life and thought will probably appear to better advantage in the happily forthcoming *Letters*.

Useful Work

It is possible that the title *This English Language* (7/6) will not give to everyone a definite idea of the book's contents, so it is well to say that Sir E. DENISON ROSS calls it "A Supplementary Guide to Everyday English" and that the publishers (LONGMAN'S) begin their description of it with the words "a conversational anthology . . ." Part I consists of over one hundred and fifty pages of literary quotations, and here it is interesting to note that the Bible comes first and foremost. In Part II we find numerous stock phrases, e.g., "Between you and me and the door-post," and the last and most diverting Part is entitled "English Tradition." A cordial welcome awaits a book that is useful to students and teachers and at the same time provides inquisitive people with ample opportunity to hunt for omissions.

Many Cargoes

At the moment it is perhaps difficult to take a lively interest in a tale whose main theme is a quarrel between two fictitious countries of Central Europe, but Mr. ROY McLOUGHLIN has put so much incident and humour into *The Yank in Fleet Street* (METHUEN, 7/6) that his story certainly deserves honourable mention. Officials from the rival countries, Etruvia and Almanian, had come to London intent either on obtaining arms or on preventing them from being supplied, and none of these visitors were at all squeamish about the methods which they used. Especially sinister (no other epithet is possible) was Mr. Brand, who was the happy possessor of a vibrant voice and hypnotic eyes. As an antidote to this most unpleasant person was an American journalist who, with luck to help him, managed to keep himself on, so to speak, the front page until Brand and his assistants were safely handcuffed.

Mr. Punch on Tour

At Burnley, from June 17th to July 15th, the Exhibition of the Original Work of Modern *Punch* Artists will be on view at the Towneley Hall Art Gallery and Museum. The Exhibition will be shown later at Mansfield, Rotherham, Warrington and Beverley.

Invitations to visit the Exhibition at any of these places will be gladly sent to readers if they apply to the Secretary, *Punch* Office, 10, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.



"I'm disappointed in the *Quins*—I always thought there was six of them!"

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